



AFRICAN STRATEGIES FOR HEALTH



Photo by Danny Chiyesu

HEALTH-RELATED CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN AFRICA: A MULTICOUNTRY STUDY

In the past decade, a growing trend towards corporations championing social impact as a core element of business strategy has paved the way for strong collaboration between public and private sectors in Africa. Health is one of the primary focal areas for socially responsible corporate contributions, given the many different needs in the region, both urgent and ongoing. As Africa's business sector continues to rise, country governments, development partners, and corporations

increasingly seek ways to harness the potential for economic, social, and environmental benefits such collaboration brings.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), an expression of the business desire to create value for both the corporation and the community, is one strategy that businesses adopt to leverage core assets to invest in the improvement of the workforce, their families, and the communities in which the business is conducted. CSR is an internal decision for a corporation, developed and implemented as part of its own strategic planning, and may include philanthropy, investment, and partnerships (informal or formal public-private partnerships, or PPPs). A deeper understanding of the CSR landscape in Africa, as well as the evolving drivers and strategies for engagement, is needed to maximize resources and impact.

In an effort to understand the potential for leveraging the contributions of private companies to the health sector in Africa, the African Strategies for Health (ASH) project conducted a review of health-related CSR across the continent. The study focused on identifying the business incentives, main approaches, and coordination efforts currently practiced for CSR, and the resulting report provides a snapshot in time in an industry that is constantly evolving and becoming increasingly institutionalized. This brief provides an overview of the findings and key recommendations for USAID missions and Ministries of Health seeking to engage with the private sector through CSR. The full report is available on the [ASH website](#).

ABOUT ASH

African Strategies for Health (ASH) is a five-year project funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau for Africa and implemented by Management Sciences for Health. ASH improves the health status of populations across Africa through identifying and advocating for best practices, enhancing technical capacity, and engaging African regional institutions to address health issues in a sustainable manner. ASH provides information on trends and developments on the continent to USAID and other development partners to enhance decision-making regarding investments in health.

Methods

This study included a comprehensive review of peer-reviewed and grey literature on CSR investments in health in Africa, a mapping of companies supporting health initiatives in Africa through CSR, and targeted interviews with 28 key informants in four African countries and the United States. Key informants included corporate representatives as well as officials responsible for private sector engagement at Ministries of Health and USAID missions. Field interviews were conducted in Angola, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda.

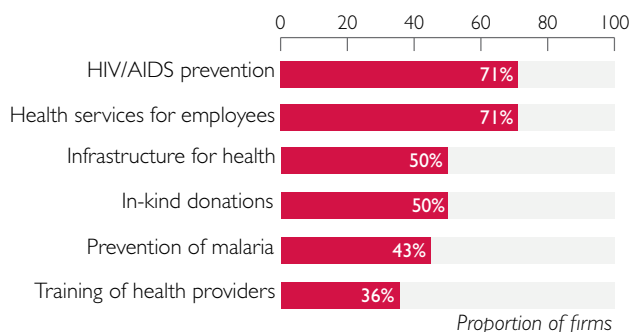
The Evolution of CSR in Africa: Key Findings

Growing emphasis on CSR

Having a well-developed CSR program has become a standard for large global corporations. More companies have embraced the practice, now regularly disclosing their activities to investors and institutionalizing CSR by designating focused staff, developing a business case, integrating into planning and budgets, and by awareness of the need to act in a way that is sustainable as the company changes focus or location. Many companies have also created corporate foundations to manage CSR, which can review and evaluate activities independently of the corporation. The practice has become both strategic, through the development of guiding national working groups, and highly professionalized. A global industry now supports CSR development with training, guidelines, coordination, cooperation, and academic and professional credentials.

For many companies, health is the main area of CSR focus. Health is a driver of economic growth and business development. As such, the health sector brings in more investment than other social areas such as education, youth development, women's empowerment, financial literacy, workforce development, agriculture, and climate change. A recent survey of the CSR practices of 100 companies from various sectors in Angola found that health and education receive the highest portion of CSR budget allocations.

Figure 1. Top mentioned health-related CSR initiatives in Angola



Source: KPMG International (2013) The KPMG Survey of Corporate Responsibility Reporting 2013

Business incentives for companies to invest in CSR

Companies increasingly see the need for not only emphasizing economic profit, but also social and environmental benefits as integral to their business model. A review of grey literature revealed the following as the main business incentives for companies to support social and health programs.

- **Innovation:** Through the lens of sustainability, many companies consider CSR as an investment, and have financed research and development efforts to generate new and more efficient solutions to social and environmental problems, such as Unilever's air conditioner that uses less water.¹
- **Cost-savings:** One of the most celebrated health sector CSR achievements in Africa is the malaria control program implemented by South African gold mining giant AngloGold Ashanti in Ghana. Upon recognition of high malaria-related costs of health care for employees and of absenteeism on productivity and profit due to the disease, the company organized a comprehensive malaria control program in the mining community, which ultimately yielded a 75-percent decrease in malaria cases and 82-percent reduction of medication costs per month in a four year period. This program has since been taken to scale in the country through the support of a Global Fund grant.²
- **Long-term sustainability:** In order to address a threatened future cocoa supply due to a decreasing desire among youth to continue farming, M&M Mars Incorporated invests heavily in CSR programs that improve quality of health, education, and agricultural services in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire where 70 percent of the world's cocoa originates.³
- **Brand differentiation:** As pharmaceutical companies vie for business in Africa, a number of them also support CSR programs, often with drug donation components that can help set them apart from their competitors. For example, Bristol-Myers Squibb's "Secure the Future" HIV program has established Children's Clinical Centers of Excellence in five African countries.⁴
- **Customer engagement:** In the fierce competition to increase revenue and prevent customers from changing networks, mobile network operators (MNO) are deploying value-added services that leverage technology for social good. In Kenya, Vodacom's subsidiary Safaricom engages its customer base by delivering innovative solutions that transform the lives of Kenyans by increasing access to services in a variety of sectors.⁵ Such activities have enable Safaricom to become by far the most popular MNO in the area.
- **Employee engagement:** CSR experts have long acknowledged the relationship between providing volunteer opportunities and employee retention and engagement with their companies. Large multinationals such as IBM, Standard bank, and Pfizer have well-established corporate volunteerism programs supporting African health programs, including in building capacity of Ministries of Health and Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanisms.^{6,7,8}



Photo by World Cocoa Foundation

CSR approaches in health in Africa

Corporations use a variety of approaches to implement CSR initiatives; some of the most common are outlined in Figure 2. These contribute to the improvement of health outcomes for employees, their families, the communities where the businesses operate, and (at times) the population at large. CSR engagement often centers on maintaining a healthy workforce, and by extension, healthy families and communities.

National-level coordination of CSR programming

National-level coordination is critical for mitigating potential negative effects and maximizing resources from CSR programming. In low-resource settings, governments increasingly want to ensure adherence to standards, maximize the use of existing resources and infrastructure, and reduce overlaps and

duplication of efforts. Ministry of Health officials interviewed as part of this study reported having developed policies, strategies, and/or mechanisms to effectively work with private sector corporations. However, many of these government officials, who are experienced public servants and health professionals, have limited experience working in corporate environments and in developing partnerships with the private sector, and thus could benefit from training and mentoring.

Almost universally throughout Africa, the private sector has self-organized through a central principle around doing business and doing good. The South African Business Initiative and Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria represent strong examples of the private sector's understanding of the need for health-related engagements with the communities and countries in which they operate.

Figure 2. Common CSR Approaches in Africa's Health Sector

Approach	Example
Grants to NGOs or individuals	Royal Dutch Shell's \$25 million grant funds MSH to strengthen the institutional capacity of select public and civil society organizations to provide health services for Nigeria's vulnerable populations in four states where Shell operates.
Workplace health and wellness programs	Because poor health lowers productivity of workers, many companies to invest in workplace health and wellness programs for company employees and their families. ⁹
Provision of pro-bono expertise	USAID has helped to leverage the expertise of Pfizer and Standard Bank to strengthen the capacity of MOHs and Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanisms and Principal Recipients in Africa in the areas of marketing, communication, knowledge management, financial management, and supply chain management. ¹⁰
In-kind donations of products	In response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, McKesson donated 200 pallets of medical supplies through World Vision, including 4 million pairs of latex gloves, 30,000 liters of disinfectant, and a massive shipment of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits. ¹¹

Case study: the corporate response to Ebola

The outbreak of the Ebola virus in West Africa in early 2014 created a crisis environment in the region. Recognition of the extent of vulnerability in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone brought together more than 120 global and local companies to respond with an impressive amount of in-kind and financial donations. The United Nations' financial tracking system noted more than \$22 million in donations by corporations as of December 2014.¹³

For global corporations without operations in the affected countries, such as IKEA and Exxon, contributions are likely to be partly humanitarian and partly driven by the desire to be recognized as a socially responsible brand concerned with the health of underserved populations. Conversely, for companies with operations in the affected countries, such as Alcoa and Dangote Cement, the Ebola outbreak hits home. They intervene in large part to help their host communities, but also to protect their existing investments in infrastructure and human resources, and to maintain their relations with local and national governments. Firestone, a rubber company operating in Liberia, exemplifies a positive response to the outbreak through its rapid establishment of an Ebola case management and surveillance system and a dedicated isolation unit within the company's health facility.

While the above figures show significant financial aid leveraged for emergency response efforts, it should be noted that implementation did not always reflect the intentions of the donations.

“Most companies now see Corporate Social Responsibility as a business imperative. Not just by a few of the Green CEO’s or Green-product companies, but by just about every successful business leader. Businesses are competing on CSR both in terms of market development and reputation.”

Dave Stangis, Intel Corporation, Director of Corporate Responsibility

Capitalizing on Opportunities: Recommendations

Based on findings of this multi-country study of existing CSR for health in Africa, the following recommendations may assist USAID missions and Ministries of Health to intensify opportunities to leverage financial and technical resources from companies that are active on the continent.

1. **Conduct periodic opportunity mapping assessments** to gain a better understanding of opportunities to partner with local and international companies in individual country contexts. USAID has developed a methodology and tools for USAID missions and Ministries of Health interested in partnering with the private sector: the Single Sector Alliance Assessment (e.g. for health only) and Multi-Sector Alliance Assessment. These tools are designed to provide guidance for “those undertaking a strategic planning process and desiring a 360-degree view of how, when, and where private sector alliances can have the most impact”.¹²
2. **Encourage formal membership and participation of corporations** engaged in health-related CSR at health sector fora that meet regularly. These stakeholder meetings, often attended by donors, UN agencies, and NGOs, provide an opportunity to better engage and encourage CSR start-up and/or expansion.
3. **Engage in local business council meetings** where groups of companies from various industries discuss issues related to doing business in that country, including CSR-related issues. It is important to be aware of the private sector and explore areas of mutual interest, where corporate goals match social goals.
4. **Conduct study tours** to health-focused CSR sites (e.g. a health clinic in a mining community) to learn how companies implement their existing initiatives and identify potential approaches and resources that could be leveraged.
5. **Organize a high-level private sector forum or roundtable** to introduce USAID to corporations with in-country operations or to discuss a specific development challenge. These meetings provide an opportunity to build awareness of USAID programs and establish a footprint in the country.
6. **Strengthen the organizational capacity** of Ministries of Health and local organizations to engage with the private sector

through coaching, mentoring, and on-the-job training on skills related to partnership design, implementation, and evaluation.

CSR’s evolution over the years has made evident a need for coordinated joint action to address some of Africa’s greatest social challenges, particularly health care. These actionable recommendations are intended to facilitate the development of meaningful relationships with local and international companies interested in investing in health programs in African countries to generate stronger partnerships that sustainably contribute to the improvement of health outcomes. ■

This brief was written by Stephanie Rotolo and Sarah Konopka (ASH), with contributions from JoAnn Paradis (ASH) and Thomas Hall (USAID). It is based on a longer report developed by MK Cope (ASH Consultant) and Lungi Okoko (formerly ASH).

ENDNOTES

1. Unilever: Global Challenges – Local Action: An Overview of Unilever’s Approach to Environmental & Social Responsibility. https://www.unilever.com/Images/global-challenges-local-actions_tcm13-5100_tcm244-409749_1_en.pdf
2. AngloGold Ashanti. Business in development: AngloGold Ashanti and The Global Fund in Ghana. <https://www.icmm.com/document/4673>
3. Mars Incorporated (2014) Mars Wins First ‘Sustainable Economy Award’ For Its ‘Vision For Change’ Program. <http://www.mars.com/global/press-center/press-list/news-releases.aspx?SiteId=94&Id=6303>
4. Bristol-Myers Squibb Company (2008-2009) Secure the Future Manual: Seven Steps to Involve the Community in HIV/AIDS Treatment Support Programmes. <http://www.bms.com/documents/STF/manual/print.pdf>
5. The Economist (2013) Why does Kenya lead the world in mobile money? <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2013/05/economist-explains-18>
6. IBM. Corporate Service Corps. <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/responsibility/corporateservicecorps/>
7. Standard Chartered Bank. Employee Volunteering. <https://www.sc.com/en/sustainability/investing-in-communities/employee-volunteering.html>
8. Pfizer: Global Health Fellows. http://www.pfizer.com/responsibility/global_health/global_health_fellows
9. GBCHHealth and Sentinel Consulting Ltd. (2013) WELLNESS FOR A GLOBAL WORKFORCE: Workplace wellness initiatives in low and middle-income countries. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/genericdocument/wcms_234832.pdf
10. USAID (2010) Building Alliances Series: Health. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1880/Health_Guide.pdf
11. World Vision (Updated 2015) Ebola outbreak slows but continues to devastate West Africa. <http://www.worldvision.org/news-stories-videos/ebola-virus-disease-outbreak>
12. USAID (2010) Integrating Alliances into Sector Assessments: Framework for Developing Development Sector Alliance Strategies and Programming. http://ssg-advisors.com/files/2013/12/GDA_Integrating_Alliances_Into_Sector_Assessments.pdf
13. UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service, December 2014 <http://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=emerg-emergencyDetails&emergID=16506>

Additional information can be obtained from:

African Strategies for Health 4301 N Fairfax Drive, Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22203 • +1.703.524.6575 • AS4H-Info@as4h.org

www.africanstrategies4health.org

This publication was made possible by the generous support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under contract number AID-OAA-C-11-00161. The contents are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.